

GARDEN TOUR

Best Time to Visit: June

Day 1

Cross into New Hampshire via I-89 into the town of Hanover. Hanover is most famous for Dartmouth College, educating the world's leaders since the mid-1700's. Main Street is the epitome of what you think a New England Main Street should be with the church steeple, village green, bustling sidewalks, cafes, restaurants, and retailers. This town has an edge over other New England towns in that the Appalachian Trail literally escapes the wooded forests and sends thru-hikers right through downtown. Hanover has a special marriage between nature, heritage, and modern technology.



- **PINE Restaurant at The Hanover Inn, Hanover (1):** One of New Hampshire's top properties and their new restaurant has immediately become a local favorite. Enjoy farm-to-table ingredients that are pieced together from the imagination of founder Chef Michael Schlow and head Chef Justin Dain.
- **Hood Museum of Art, Hanover (2):** As the group finishes their meals, schedule in extra time for them to wander next door to the Hood Museum of Art. This free museum protects one of the largest and oldest collegiate collections in North America. In addition, it attracts amazingly priceless, thought-provoking exhibits from the world's most legendary creators.
- **The Fells Historic Estate & Gardens, Newbury (3):** A 22-room Colonial Revival home on 83 conserved acres, this attraction boasts meticulous, themed gardens surrounded by woodland trails. The Fells is on the National Registry for Historic Places and is a project of the Garden Conservancy.
- Cut through the Upper Valley to Lake Winnepesaukee to check into your waterfront resort for the evening. If you choose a resort with a private beach, plan to arrange a lobster bake next to the water or a bonfire BBQ.

LIVE FREE and
experience

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Day 2

New Hampshire's Lakes Region is filled with 273 lakes and ponds. A scenic train traces the shore of Lake Winnepesaukee (a.k.a. The Big Lake), while cruises crisscross to ports in the heart of five different lakefront towns. Wolfeboro, the first vacation resort in North America is located here. Start the day easy with breakfast at your resort and shopping at Mill Falls Marketplace in downtown Meredith. If you have an ambitious group, also in downtown Meredith, at the top of Main Street, is Hermit Woods Winery.

- **Hermit Woods Winery, Meredith (4):** Crafting both traditional and non-traditional wines and meads out of fruits sourced as locally as possible. View the wine-making process and grab a taste or two or three... Be sure to ask the guys to explain how the winery earned its name as it is an enjoyable local story that's better when heard right from the source.
- **Kellerhaus, Laconia (5):** New Hampshire's first chocolate and ice cream maker beginning in 1906 now offers a large gift shop, candy store, and a Belgian waffle breakfast. Groups can prearrange to do chocolate making with the chocolate masters. If there is limited time, a side-stop here is highly encouraged.
- Plan to arrive at the Weirs Beach dock by 12:00 PM for a 12:30 PM sail one-way lunch option across the Big Lake to downtown Wolfeboro (cruise schedules could change so be sure to call head to make reservations).
- **Mount Washington Cruises, Weirs Beach (6):** Cruise between many of Winnepesaukee's 230 islands through 44,000 acres of sparkling water aboard the 230ft (70m) M/S Mount Washington, a steamship from the 1800's. Groups can request to do a one-way trip which makes for a fascinating mode of transportation to the other side of the Lake.
- Have the coach drive around to the other side to greet the group and then continue the journey north.
- **Castle in the Clouds, Moultonborough (7):** The Lucknow Estate built in 1914 atop the Ossipee Mountain Range overlooks the Big Lake. It is a fascinating example of art and architecture which was designed to be in harmony with nature. The museum estate and the Carriage House are decorated with beautifully manicured gardens and miles of easy walking trails.
- Drive along the Spaulding Turnpike to the Seacoast Region where you will stay for two nights.

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Day 3

Wake up in the hub of the New Hampshire seacoast. Portsmouth has more accolades than most towns in the United States: on Forbes list of “America’s prettiest towns”, “the Best Walking City” by Prevention Magazine, “26th top historic place in the world” by National Geographic, among the “Top 20 towns in America” by Outside Magazine... What’s drawing all this attention? Portsmouth has been a working port city for trade and fishing since 1623 so it’s older than the United States, but it has one of the hippest scenes in the country. A bustling downtown with over 100 independent restaurants within walking distance (300 within the city boundaries), hundreds of boutique shops, theatres, jazz bars, historic homes and attractions, and cruises. Also, New Hampshire’s seacoast boasts an ocean science museum, sandy beaches, whale watches, and a lighthouse that stands where the first aggressive act of the Revolutionary War took place.

- **Isles of Shoals Steamship Company, Portsmouth (8):** Sail aboard the 340 passenger M/V Thomas Laighton as the crew explains the legends and lore of this cluster of nine different islands. If you have time, make special arrangements to get off the boat for a few hours on Star Island for a guided tour or for a brunch at the historic, rustic hotel.
- Enjoy an afternoon of lunch on your own and shopping in downtown Portsmouth. Have the group meet at Market Square at 3:00 PM for a walking tour with a guide from the Greater Portsmouth Chamber to Strawberry Banke Historic Living Museum. The guide will give a condensed “Portsmouth 101” along the way and explain the different gardens and memorials in the city.
- **Strawberry Banke, Portsmouth (9):** An outdoor living Puddle Dock community museum on 10 acres of downtown property bringing over 300 years of American history to life; beautiful colonial homes and docents moving in and about. One of the most popular draws is the preserved historic gardens nearly four hundred years old. This attraction preserves and cultivates heirloom seeds. They practice original organic gardening since their gardens predate modern methods. They offer exclusive tours through the many floral and agricultural gardens for groups by request and can also include a Historic Foodways program with culinary history interpreters.



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Day 3 Continued

- **Prescott Park, Portsmouth (10):** Immediately across from Strawberry Banke is this gorgeous 10 acre park complete with a 3 acre stage area on the banks of the Piscataqua River. It has entertained more than 3.5 million visitors with over 10,000 productions of music, art, theater, and dance since 1974; all with no admission cost. The formal garden displays fountains, tree-lined walkways, a flower wall, and a rose garden. After exploring the gardens, head to your special reserved spot on the lawn to watch the evening show beginning at 7:00 PM. Having a pre-arranged picnic dinner is recommended.

Additional Options

If the group has time to squeeze in a few additional stops, these gardens are a short drive from Portsmouth.

- If the group is in good physical condition and the group size is about 35 passengers plan a day visit at Appledore Island in the Isles of Shoals. This option would be a full day excursion and would replace many activities recommended in this itinerary. The group would be required to stand for the full 45 minute trip to and from the island and the island itself has rugged, uneven terrain. **Celia Thaxter's Garden Tour, Appledore Island, Maine (11):** Ride on the r/v Challenger, a University of New Hampshire research vessel, departing from the Marine Research Pier in New Castle. Lunch will be included in this program.
- **Fullers Garden, North Hampton (12):** A non-profit botanical garden and estate from the early 1900's designed in the now familiar Colonial Revival style. This garden includes a formal rose garden, a Japanese garden, and English perennials.
- **Bedrock Gardens, Lee (13):** This privately owned property includes elements such as a 3/4-mile circulation path that connects the garden rooms with vistas along the way, an espaliered fence, a Japanese Tea House, many sculptures, garden art and two miles of woodland trails.

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Day 4

You will cover a lot of ground today so plan on an early start. Before leaving the seacoast, journey south along Route 1A to enjoy the sites of wealthy mansion estates, rocky coasts, and sandy beaches before hopping on Route 101. Depart by 10:00 AM. Make sure to do a rest stop at the Hooksett North Information Center off I-93. Afterwards, you will work your way north from Concord while splitting up the commute at different gardens along the way.

- **Mill Brook Gallery and Sculpture Garden, Concord (14):** A small attraction in north Concord with perennial gardens, a field with abstract sculptures, woodlands and ponds. The three room indoor gallery has rotating exhibits from artists who mostly reside in New Hampshire. The gallery carries all original works of art in a peaceful setting.
- Depart by 12:30 PM
- **The Shaker Table Restaurant at Canterbury Shaker Village, Canterbury (15):** This very unique culinary experience is the result of a partnership between this living museum and the nearby Lakes Region Community College's Community Arts program. Led by Chef Patrick Hall, over 120 students are given real life professional experience here. After lunch, enjoy a guided tour of Canterbury Shaker Village which has 29 Shaker buildings and 694 acres of forests, fields, gardens, trains, and mill ponds.

Additional Options

If you want to squeeze in another garden or two, these two are on your way:

- **Tarbin Gardens, Franklin (16):** Gardens include the Mother's Day Garden, Alpine Slope, Main Avenue, Catalpa Garden, Three Pines, Mayapple Dell, the Formal Garden, and the West Side. With advance notice, your group could enjoy a guided tour and English cream tea.
- **Kirkwood Garden at Squam Lakes Natural Science Center, Holderness (17):** Calling itself an "informal" garden, this attraction includes a variety of colorful plants that intentionally attract many species of bees, butterflies, and birds. The upper shady garden displays ferns, hostas, azaleas, and rhododendrons while the lower sunny garden is layered in shrubs, trees, and perennials. This attraction is most well-known for the live wildlife exhibits in another section of the property including black bear, deer, mountain lion, otter, coyote, owls, eagles and many more. They also operate the Squam Lake Cruises on this pristine lake made famous by the movie On Golden Pond.
- Continue north to your hotel in the White Mountains.

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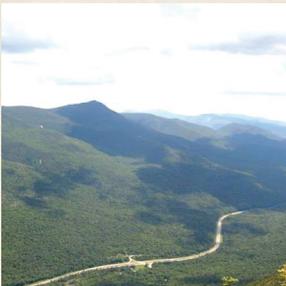
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Day 5

Explore I-93 through Franconia Notch before returning home and first celebrate the blooming lupines with the locals. Afterwards, make a final stop in the very little town of Bethlehem. This small mountainous town is most famous for attracting Jewish vacationers from New York City since the 1800's for its clean air and relief from Hay Fever. In addition to its clean air, Bethlehem attracts outdoor enthusiasts, history buffs, and garden fans.



Image Courtesy: Ellen Edersheim



- **Lupine Festival, Sugar Hill/Franconia (18):** Every June, this wildflower takes over the landscape with the Franconia, Presidential, and Kinsman Mountain ranges in the backdrop. These peaks are often still capped in white in June even though summer warmth is enjoyed at their bases. Fluttering above fields of lupines are the butterflies and birds that they attract. Enjoy a full calendar of events including concerts, open air markets, dessert and dance festivities, and more.
- **The Rocks Estate, Bethlehem (19):** This educational and conservation property set on 1400 acres was once the summer home of a wealthy Chicago businessman and the International Harvester co-founder John Jacob Glessner. Now The Rocks Estate attracts visitors from around the world for its historic structures, the Carriage Barn, recreational trails, tree farm, maple experience and wildlife tours, and its formal gardens. Group programming can be customized to the group's requests and every group can enjoy a horse drawn wagon ride through the tree farm anytime of the year.

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